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SUBJECT: JACK ANDERSON ARTICLE ON EYADEMA

1. FOLLOWING IS TEXT OF ANDERSON'S ARTICLE APPEARING IN JULY 8 ISSUE OF "WASHINGTON POST".

2. QUOTE PRESIDENT CARTER HAS PICKED A CURIOUS TARGE FOR ADMIRATION IN AFRICA: ETIENNE GNASSINGBE EYADEMA; THE COMIC-OPERA DICTATOR OF TOGO.

3. I HAVE NOMINATED EYADEMA AS THE WORLD'S MOST ASININE DESPOT, CITING HIS WEIRD ATTEMPT O MAKE HIMSELF A LIVING GOD BY SUCH MEASURES AS PAPERING TOGO WITH PORTRAITS OF HIMSELF WEARING ANGEL WINGS, AND MAKING A SHRINE OF THE AIRPLANE WRECKAGE FROM WHICH HE MIRACULOUSLY ESCAPED.

4. BUT THERE IS A DARKER SIDE TO EYADEMA'S EGOMANIA. THOUGH NOT AS DEMONSTRABLY BLOODYHANDED AS IDI AMIN, EYADEMA'S REPRESSIVE RULE HAS AROUSED CONDEMNATION FROM INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS GROUPS.

5. YET LAST YEAR, CARTER DASHED OFF A BRIEF NOTE TO HE TOGOLESETYRANT, PRAISING HIMFOR PARDONINGTWO PRISONERS CONDEMNED TO DEAH. CARTER WROTE THAT EYADEMA HAD SHOWN

"THE CONCERN FOR THE FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS OF LIFE AND JUSTICE COMMON TO OUR TWO NATIONS."

6. THE SIMILAR VALUES SHARED BY THE UNITED STATES AND TOGO, CARTER WROTE, WOULD BE THE BASIS FOR CONTINUED FRIENDSHIP.

7. CARTER'S ROSY VIEW OF EYADEMA'S REGIME IS NOT SHARED BY THE STATE DEPARTMENT. IN A HUMAN RIGHTS REPORT EARLIER THIS YEAR, THE DEPARTMENT NOTED THAT EYADEMA HAS DETAINED PEOPLE WITHOUT TRIAL AND WITHOUT FIXED SENTENCES, CONCLUDING THAT "SOME CASES OF UNAUTHORIZED TORTURE HAVE PROBABLY OCCURRED."

8. THE RESPECTED CHAMPION OF THE DOWNTRODDEN, AMNESTY INERNATIONAL, HAS ALSO CITED EYADEMA FOR HUMAN RIGHTS ABUSES.

9. MOST DAMNING OF ALL WAS THE ASSESSMENT OF TOGO MADE BY FREEDOM HOUSE, A NEW YORK-BASED HUMAN RIGHTS WATCHDOG. ON A SCALE OF 1 TO 7, FROM MOST FREE TO LEAST FREE, TOGO GOT A 7 RATING AS A NATION WHERE "THERE IS EXTENSIVE POLITICAL IMPRISONMENT...OR OTHER POLITICAL MURDERS AND BRUTALITY... (OR) UNLIMITED DETENTION, WITH OR WITHOUT TRIAL, FOR POLITICAL VIEWS..." EVEN THE SOVIET UNION WAS GIVEN A 6 RATING BY FREEDOM HOUSE.

10. YET CARTER SEES TOGO UNDER EYADEMA AS A COUNTRY THA SHARES AMERICAN VALUES. NEEDLESS TO SAY, EYADEMA HAS BRANDISHED THE CARTER LETTER AS PROOF OF HIS BENIGN RULE.

11. FOOTNOTE: AN ADMINISTRATION SPOKESMAN TOLD MY ASSOCIAE BOB SHERMAN THAT CARTER'S LETTER WAS INTENDED AS A GESTURE THAT WOULD ENCOURAGE EYADEMA TO LIBERALIZE HIS REGIME. CHRISTOPHER

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Anderson article on Togo

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R. T.C

Human Rights and the Regime of Togo

For a long time the government of Togo has succeeded in hiding from the general public, especially international opinion, the systematic methods it has perfected to violate human rights. Togo's infernal machinery of oppression is better lubricated than those of Idi Amin, Macias Nguema and Bokassa. Consequently, torture, arbitrary imprisonment, summary executions, assassinations and withdrawal of nationality et cetera are carried out more discreetly. Nevertheless, the many jails of the "national helmsman" are full to the brim. The detainees live in conditions of filth, disease, undernourishment, leading to their general physical and mental breakdown. There are severe cases of paralysis, total or partial, as well as diseases resulting from lack of vitamins, such as depigmentation of the skin, as for instance in the case of Alphonse Kossivi de Souza who became completely white after ten months in prison.

Human rights violations in Togo take various forms:

(a) Shutting off of water and electricity.

(b) Closing down of companies, offices and restaurants.

(c) Withdrawal of nationality.

(d) Compulsory change of names, to make citizens more "authentic"

(e) Various forms of detention and imprisonment.

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(f) Political assassination

(g) Collective punishment

(h) Torture

Fear is further instilled into the population through government organised terrorist actions, kidnappings and sequestrations. Several torture camps where summary executions, forced confessions and denunciations take place, have been created. School children, students, and civil servants, have to set time aside (up to 3 hours a day) to sing and dance to the glory of the "beloved guide of the nation." Students' scholarships are arbitrarily withdrawn and restored the social fabric of the nations has come under severe strain - Examples given in this note are the most recent and are by no means exhaustive.

1. Cutting off of water and electricity in Lome

Opposition members, their families and citizens who do not enthusiastically support the "Guide" no longer have the right to water and electricity, which in this country are government owned utilities, e.g. cases of Mr. Guy Kouassigan, Pascal Koussigan, their father and sister who live in the 'Quartier des Etoiles' and at Nyekonakpoe. This is also the case of Baby Amorin and his family, Merlaud Lawson and his family, Francisco Lawson and his family, Alphonse de Souza, Naty de Souza, Emmanuel de Souza, Germain de Souza

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and their families. It has also happened in the houses of the former President of Togo, Sylvanus Olympio and in those of his sons and relatives, and in the house of Boukary Kerim (a doctor in vetinerary science) who later died following torture in one of the camps, etc. . . .

2. Closing down of companies, offices and restaurants

Citizens whose children are suspected of opposition sympathies are refused the right to establish businesses, legal practices and restaurants. This is the case of 'Travaux Atlantiques' whose accounts have been frozen because the manging director, Mr. Amorin, is the brother of an officer suspected of plotting. Similiarly, the Chinese restaurant 'The Mandarin' has been closed down in Nov. 1979 because its owner is a distant relative of the Olympios who have been accused of subversion.

3. Freezing of Bank and Postal Savings Accounts

This has happened to Merlaud Lawson, Francisco Lawson, Benjamin Lawson, Baby Amorin, Guy Kouassigan, Richard da Silveira, the former Minister of Information, Polycarpe Johnson.

4. Withdrawal of Nationality

Because certain members of Togolese families are accused of having been involved in a plot or as sympathisers with the opposition, their nationalities and their passports

have been withdrawn. Families with foreign sounding names such as Lawson have had their papers withdrawn on the grounds that they are not citizens. This is Eyadema's particular form of xenophobia. It is important to note that along the coast of Togo, as in many coastal areas in West Africa, the adoption of foreign names, especially European ones, is a phenomenon which dates from the time of Vasco da Gama.

5. The President's Effigy

Every civil servant has to carry a badge on the lapel of his jacket with Eyadema's picture or the emblem of his party. This is supposed to be a sign of gratitude for belonging to the public services of Togo, solidarity with the President.

6. Obligatory alteration of Christian names

Those who do not change their Christian names are deprived of identity papers. This regulation has been drafted as a return to 'authenticity' and 'Togolese identity'. Whether one is called Paul or Koffi cannot have a great bearing on a person's political behaviour if an alteration in his opinions is not also brought about. Citizens are even compelled to alter the names of their dead parents. The administrative problems created by this gratituous change of name are considerable.

7. Different types of detention and the Detainees

a) Arbitrary Arrest of: Zolan Emmanuel; Adjevoda Bernard; Sirikou Kokou Antoine (imprisoned for several years for having written to a friend in France telling him that all was not well in Togo); Yorou Silas; Sewoandan Ernest; Sebuabey Mattey; Tsogbe Franck; Bossakomi (arrested for having been a chauffeur for Francisco Lawson who has now been condemned to death in his absence); Yehouessi Arthur Aku Barnabas (who died following torture); Barthelemy Lawson; Aboukerim Tagbra Sylvere; Bryan Dorkenoo (arrested for possession of the opposition newspaper, 'Le Combat'). All were imprisoned in the the disciplinary jails at the military camp of Tokoin or at the gendarmerie nationale at Lome. None have been tried.

b) Those who have been imprisoned and freed years or months later without trial or clearing their names: Agbodjan Innocent; Ayitee Cornelius; Gbikpi Benissan; Soumaro Agbodjavou; Leon Folly et cetera.

c) Imprisonment following a 'fixed' trial: Alphonse Kossivi de Souza; Abalo de Souza, Jean Sauvi de Tove; Commandant Sauvee et cetera

d) Condemned to death: Emmanuel de Souza and Commandant Sanvee; their sentences were later commuted to life imprisonment. The crimes with which they were officially charged do not warrant sentences of this nature.

Those condemned to death in their absence were: Gil Olympio; Bonito Olympio; Toto Olympio; Colonel Merlaud Lawson; Captain Francisco Lawson; Georges Beke; Koudjessan et cetera.

e) Youth arrests: Mlle Badje Massan and Teko, both pupils in their second year at secondary school, were arrested in November 1978; Lea, Essivi Amorin and children under eight years were arrested and later released for adherence to the family of Baby Amorin, the children of Mme Amelia Sossah, et cetera.

f) Prisoners who have disappeared during detention: Pedro Freitas; Ayite Saturnin, Tagba Sylvere and others.

g) Thousands of others imprisoned for the purpose of terrorising or dissuading them from their political opinions Opponents, non-supporters and those discontented with the regime are imprisoned for several weeks or months and then released. This is frequently repeated in order to indicate to these people that they are under surveillance and that it is not in their interest to make any protest. Thus a whole people suffers from amnesia and refuses to talk. Arrests of this sort run into hundreds or thousands in the different towns and villages in Togo. Examples can be taken from the frequent arrests of Dr. Tremou, of Dr. Kiadjo of Akakpo and Dakitsé who work at the Central Bank, of Mme

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Boukary Kerim; Yves Dogbe; of Ayite Gaba Miss Juliette Lawson; of Placca Lawson and others.

8. The Reign of Terror

- Attempted Kidnaps; Kidnappings and Lock-ins

a) Attempted Kidnaps of the unionists Salami, Boukari Kerim and Beke Georges de Souza Laurence and others.

b) Lock-ins of Seth Wilson, students on vacation (Akakpame'); all of the Staff at the Togolese embassy in Gabon who were first locked up in the embassy and later repatriated to Lome: Ambassador Moumouni Daboya and the two first counsellors were brought back under military arrest. Agbesie's (one of counsellors) misdemeanor was to have invited foreign journalists to come to Togo to investigate the corruption and mismanagement of the economy there. He was beaten and had his arms broken in front of the ambassador. He was charged with rivalling the President who personally undertakes the prohibited export of food products, to Libreville in particular. This trade is prohibited because there is insufficient food in the country to provide for the needs of the population, and, more particularly to enable a certain Mr. Assor 'the economic adviser to Eyadema' to hold the monopoly of export, thereby realising considerable profit and commission for himself and the President.

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Togolese students in Dakar on vacation in Lome were also placed under house arrest because they refused to adhere to the students' organisation which supported the regime.

Kidnappings: Tchankoum was kidnapped in Upper Volta and was executed by death squad near Dapango in the latter part of 1970. Emmanuel de Souza and Teyi Lawson were kidnapped in Accra on 2 June 1979 with the assistance of several corrupt Ghanaians. Benis Workema Lawson was kidnapped in Niamey on 2 October 1979 with the covert participation of certain Nigerien authorities.

9. Cutting-off of student scholarships

This has happened to officers of the AESTF and of UNETO (two students' organisations for students from Togo in France.) Thus some students have been forced to cut short their studies and return to Lome. Sometimes they have been forced to stay. This was the case with the dozens of students at Dakar who refused to adhere to the pro-government students' organisation.

10. Flight of officials of the regime

Many officials familiar with the nature of the regime have fled the country at the smallest political disturbance, for instance: Benjamin Lawson; Lt. Attignah, the former Minister of Information; Polycarpe Johnson.

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11. Terrorist Activities

A certain Mr. David Davidson has testified in a sworn affidavit that he was paid by the President of Togo through the intermediary of certain persons (Matthias Ajavon, the Togolese Ambassador in London; Natchaba, the Director of the President's Office; Donou, Eyadema's brother and chief of the commando forces in Togo) to assassinate opponents of the regime in exile: Gilchrist Olympio, Bonito Olympio; Merlaud Lawson; Francisco Lawson. Davidson, it should be noted, belongs to the mercenary group of John Banks (who has since been arrested in London) who made certain 'confessions' to Eyadema. These 'confessions' were the basis of the public security trials held in Togo to condemn to death 10 nationals and to give heavy prison sentences to other Togolese citizens. On 15 October 1979 a bomb (later ascertained by French experts to be an extremely powerful one) was found under the car of Gil Olympio.

12. Different types of torture

Boot kicks are frequently inflicted on prisoners and many die as a result; for instance: Theophille Mally. A prisoner of Amouzou, deputy chief of police, had his head sprinkled with petrol and then set alight; he died of his burns; ear-drums are frequently pierced with matchsticks; an electrical current is passed through the genitals, for instance

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in the case of Kossivi Alphonse de Souza, and through the breasts of women, for instance Mme Florence Barrigoli. The machine used is to be found at the central police station and the building which formerly housed the French embassy. These terrible tasks are regularly carried out by Amouzou, Amegninou, a police officer of the presidency - Captain Adevi (who has since been disgraced), Lt. Amegi. All were trained by experts from North Korea.

·Military Football

An iron ball of the dimensions of a football is placed several yards from a wooden goal in a dimly lit room. The prisoner is told to kick the ball. If he manages to put it in the goal he will be freed. A signed certificate of release is shown to him. The prisoner gives what he believes to be a football a hard kick and breaks bones as a result.

·The 'Cafe'

The prisoner is taken on a drill ground surrounded by a hedge in which 50 to 60 soldiers armed with clubs are hidden. He is left there and at a signal from his escort the crowd of soldiers swarms from the hedge to beat him up until he loses consciousness. He is then revived by being thrown into a barrel of water.

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13. The Various Prison Camps

· The civil prison where visiting human rights experts, journalists, etc. are taken

· The disciplinary prison of the Lome Gendarmerie

· The concentration camps at Laudja (Lama-Kava)

· The terrible camp of Temedja (a real concentration camp). This camp merits further description. It is called a re-education camp and is situated some ten kilometres from Atakpamne. It is the base of the para-commandos and is known as the 'death camp'. The torture area is situated 35 kilometres from the camp. From the time of their arrival the prisoners or 'death candidates' (civilians, soldiers and others) are given a 'warming-up' period in the bush where they are left barefoot among the rocks. Frequent whippings are inflicted. After the warming-up period they are made to run blind-fold to the torture centre, 35 kilometres away. When they arrive they are plunged into vats of water and left there, on and off for four days. They are obliged to defecate and urinate in the water which comes up to their chin. They are then locked in cells were peppers are being burned. Following that they are made to run intermittently from 6 in the morning to 6 pm. The survivors are then made to undergo the swimming test. They have to swim for several hours in a pool partially filled with engine oil.

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After that there is the fighters' march which consists of crawling several times, improving each time on the previous performance, down a narrow low corridor lined with barbed wire which tears at the skin of the prisoner. This is followed by heavy manual labour from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m. consisting of pulling up, breaking and carrying boulders and rocks. They are kept in cells that are lit up all night.

The wounded and the sick are piled up without medical care in a 'sanitary' room in the camp. Particularly troublesome prisoners and opponents of the regime are frequently taken up by helicopter and dropped in mid-flight.

14. The Principal Torturers

Colonel Assila, and sometimes the President himself 'takes care' of intellectual detainees (as in the case of the son of Dr. Alidepe). Also involved are, the brother of Eyadema, Commander Donou, Captain Amegnimou, Captaim Amouzou, etc.

15. Assassination

President Sylvanus Olympio in Jan. 1963 - Eyadema claimed publicly, that God guided his hand to shoot the President.

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16. Summary Executions

Following the notorious 'plot' of 8 August 1970 Clement KOLOR was shot in cold blood when he was unarmed in his own home by a military commando. An official communique announced that a key witness was shot down as he attempted to run away.

· Osseyi

· Djagba Laurent was assassinated at the end of December 1970 in the cells of Tokoin camp. How can we believe in a plot in 1979 taking into account all that was invented in 1967, 68, 70 and 75 to eliminate or neutralise opponents.

· Police Commissioner Dana was accused of having said that Eyadema was embezzling public funds. He was imprisoned initially at Sokode and later at Lome. On 24 January 1974 he was transferred to the charge of Colonel Tchango where he was to undergo a family trial as Dana was from the birthplace of Eyadema. He was executed that evening by the Minister of Justice.

· Theophille Mally died in prison following torture.

· Bokobosso: in 1967 condemned to death for having attempted to kill Eyadema; the president claims that he repreived him. In fact he was beaten and tortured to death at the R.I.T. camp in 1973.

· Paul Comlan: strangled in prison on 31 August 1975

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· Gaston Gnewou; the brother in law of Eyadema himself. He was wounded by machine gun bullets fired on the orders of Eyadema himself and taken to the hospital of Tokoin for medical care. He was then shot dead in his hospital bed by Eyadema's gun-men. What was Gnewou's crime? Confronted by a wave of repression and various forms of embezzlement he had established a committee of army officers from the north to act as an advisory council for the President in order to curb this behaviour which he felt was dangerous for the northern community. He did not wish feelings of resentment and revenge to be awakened in the southerners. Eyadema did not appreciate this initiative which to him savoured of insubordination and audacity.

· At the same time a further fourteen members of the committee were executed at Pya.

· Boukary Kerim died 10 days after leaving jail. He had been imprisoned for 7 years without trial.

· Nicolas Djondo died one month after his release from prison.

Prisoners who die in or following detention are never reported as dying following physical torture but always of such causes as: - 'hanging': Captain Paul Comlan, for example was reported to have 'hanged' himself in prison 'circulatory collapse': for example Theophille Mally 'disease of the spinal column': for example, Boukary Kerim

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL

17. Withdrawal of the right of asylum and flight of the intellectuals

Intellectuals, engineers, doctors and technicians are fleeing Togo. They are being forced to leave by the undemocratic climate of the country. It is impossible to cite here all the names of all the young Togolese intellectuals who have left the country. Suffice it to quote as an example the fact that there are more Togolese doctors in the region of Paris alone than there are in the whole of Togo. Nationals such as Adossama (ILO), Kouassigan (UNICEF) Boukary Djobo (Gabon), Looky (Yaounde) and young intellectuals, particularly those of the north who find the regime inacceptable prefer to work abroad, and not return to Togo. In spite of their quitting the country Eyadema tries to harm them; he requests that they be dismissed from their jobs or attempts to place them under house arrest when they return on home leave to Togo to see their families (Adossama, for example was put under house arrest for 10 days and only released after intervention by the ILO).

Eyadema requested that Venance Doe Bruce, a French citizen of Togolese birth, working at the S.F.P. (a French publicity company) and a opponent of Eyadema's regime, be dismissed from his post and extradited to Togo. France, a democratic country, refused. He successfully ordered the dismissal from Air Afrique of two employees: Naty de Souza (after 12

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years of service) and Bella de Souza (after 8 years of service). This followed the imprisonment of Naty de Souza's two brothers, Alphonse and Emmanuel.

18. Other Features of the Regime of President Eyadema

A. Personal property of the President:

In 1963 Eyadema earned 44,000 CFA francs per annum and 411,000 CFA from 1977. However during this time he has acquired in his own name without benefit of any loan the following property:

- a chateau at Tokoin ; Lome 11 for which the basic framework alone cost one billion CFA francs
- an appartment on Boulevard Malesherbes, Paris 8 - estimated value 150 million CFA francs
- an appartment at 12 rue de Presbourg, Paris 8 - estimated value 60 million CFA francs
- a chateau at Arcachon near Bordeaux

Meanwhile civil servants go unpaid and peasants live in abject poverty.

B. POLITICAL BACKGROUND TO THE PRESENT SITUATION

President Eyadema has been in power for the past 13 years, or effectively in power for the last 17 years - that is to say since the assassination of the first President of Togo, Mr. Sylvanus Olympio. In January 1967 Eyadema staged a

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a second coup, this time against President Nicholas Grunitzki. The country has since been ruled without a constitution, Parliament, independent judiciary or any semblance of representative government. Corruption is rife and all echelons of the government, including the President himself are known not only to condone these misdemeanors, but to actively participate in them (refer Nos 1, 2 & 3 of 'Le Combat'). There is gross violation of civil and political rights and in the last few years the economic situation has become catastrophic. For a small country whose total export earnings average about US$ 125 million, the total outstanding external debt is 1.2 billion US$. Under the pressure of external creditors who wanted to have some institutional controls over the finances of the country the President decided to organise elections in December 1979.

The new consitution he was offering the country has not been seen by anybody, but he claims in published utterances that it was patterned on the constitution of the French 5th Republic with 'a strong executive and a viligant Parliament'. A referendum was held to approve the constitution and the official announcement claimed 99.9% of the electorate had approved it. Presidential elections were held simultaneously for which only one candidate stood and where only one party was represented, ie the President and his party (RPT, which is the only legal party in Togo). The official

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government bulletin informed the world that the president polled 99.8% of the votes. Similarly all members of Eyademas party in Parliament were reported to have been elected by 99% of the electorate.

C. Our movement, the MTD (Mouvement Togolaise pour la Democratie: The Togolese Deomcratic Movement) was created by various leaders of political thought in Togo on 13 January 1979, as an answer to the country's political and economic ills. The names of the founding members and of the main sympathisers still resident in Togo cannot be publicised for obvious security reasons. Outside the country the movement's administrative Secretary General is Mr. Ricardo da Silveira and its Treasurer is Mr. Ekoe Doe-Bruce. The movement's chief spokesman and one of its founding members is Mr. Gilchrist Olympio; another spokesman is Mr. Patrick Lawson who is also editor of the movement's newspaper 'Le Combat'. The aim of the movement which embraces various political tendencies in the country is the fight for the restoration of basic civil and political rights and the creation of political institutions that are democratically elected. One of the objectives of the movement is to create a multi-party system, an independent judiciary and a representative government.

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The movement is organised on the basis of 'federations' which are based both in Togo and among the large Togolese diaspora. Each federation elects a member to the central committee which in turn elects a political bureau. The latter comprises, in addition to its elected members, the original founders of the movement. The political bureau is responsible for the general orientation of the movement. The central committee is its executive arm and the federations are responsible for working closely with the local population.

C. S. Olympio

Gilchrist Olympio
(left this in
April 1960)

SPOKESMAN
Mouvement Togolais pour la
Democratie (M.T.D.)

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